

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-03 INR-07 L-02 ACDA-05

NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 USIA-06 TRSE-00 SAJ-01

SS-15 NSC-05 DODE-00 BIB-01 OTPE-00 EB-07 /079 W

----- 029640

R 051530Z MAR 75

FM USMISSION GENEVA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1155

INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 1499

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: CSCE, PFOR, XG

SUBJECT: CSCE POLICY: INFORMATION-RADIO BROADCASTING

REF: A) STATE 035745; B) GENEVA 912

1. THIS MESSAGE REQUESTS GUIDANCE ON APPROACH TO THIS ISSUE. THE DEPARTMENT'S SUGGESTION FOR A FORMULATION OF THE FIRST SENTENCES IN THIS TEXT IN AN EFFORT TO DEAL WITH CESSATION OF JAMMING (REFTEL A) WAS CONSIDERED BY NATO CAUCUS TO BE BADLY BALANCED. THE FIRST SENTENCE WAS TERMED AS "TOO WEAK" AND THE SECOND AS "TOO STRONG, AND DAMAGING TO NATO EFFORTS TO AVOID QUALIFYING INFORMATION" (I.E., QUALITY OF INFORMATION HAS TO MEET CERTAIN STANDARDS) IN OTHER TEXTS--LIKE JOURNALISTS PAPER AND INTRODUCTORY TEXT TO INFORMATION SUBCHAPTER.

2. MOST DELEGATIONS WOULD PREFER THAT THE ISSUE BE DROPPED BECAUSE: A) THEY BELIEVE THAT A WEAK OR AMBIGUOUS SENTENCE IS WORSE THAN NO MENTION FOR WESTERN PURPOSES (ITALY, NETHERLANDS, BELGIUM, CANADA); B) EFFORTS WILL NOT BE SUCCESSFUL AND CAUSE OTHER DIFFICULTIES (GENERAL). NEVERTHELESS ALL NATO ALLIES AGREED THAT THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT WOULD BE ACCEPTABLE:

"THE PARTICIPATING STATES NOTE THE BROADENING OF THE DIS-
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SEMINATION OF RADIO INFORMATION AND CONSIDER IT DESIRABLE

THAT THE IMPROVEMENT IN THE SITUATION SHOULD BE SUSTAINED. IN DOING SO, THEY ALSO EXPRESS THE CONVICTION THAT RADIO AND TELEVISION BROADCASTS TO THE OTHER PARTICIPATING STATES WILL CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE STRENGTHENING OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AMONG PEOPLES."

3. THE NATO CAUCUS EXPRESSED A PREFERENCE FOR THE US TO TAKE THE ISSUE UP DIRECTLY WITH THE SOVIETS, AT LEAST INITIALLY, SINCE MOST OTHER DELS HAVE VIRTUALLY ABANDONED THE TOPIC. WE AGREED TO TRANSMIT THE TEXT TO THE DEPARTMENT NOTING THE VIEWS OF OUR ALLIES, AND ASSURED THEM ALSO THAT THE US DOES NOT WANT A BAD TEXT AND WOULD ABANDON THE EFFORT RATHER THAN ACCEPT ONE. WE ALSO SAID THAT WE WOULD BE WILLING TO TAKE UP THE ISSUE DIRECTLY WITH THE SOVIETS.

4. WE HAVE ALREADY LAID THE GROUNDWORK WITH THE SOVIETS BY INDICATING TO DUBININ THAT HIS PROPOSAL FOR A FIRST SENTENCE, "THEY WILL FACILITATE THE IMPORT BY COMPETENT ORGANIZATIONS AND FIRMS OF AUDIO-VISUAL MATERIAL, PROMOTING, IN THE LIGHT OF EXISTING CIRCUMSTANCES, ACCESS TO SUCH MATERIAL FROM THE OTHER PARTICIPATING STATES," IS NOT ACCEPTABLE AND STATING THAT WE WOULD BE TALKING TO HIM AS SOON AS WE HAD ALLIED AGREEMENT ON AN APPROPRIATE APPROACH TO THIS ISSUE. WE ARE PREPARED TO BEGIN DISCUSSIONS WITH SOVIETS AS SOON AS DEPARTMENT APPROVES.

5. IN CONSIDERING APPROACH WE SHOULD TAKE HERE, DEPARTMENT WILL WISH TO BEAR IN MIND THAT SECOND SENTENCE IN NATO TEXT (PARA 2 ABOVE) WOULD BE TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE TO SOVIETS. THE PHRASE "WILL CONTINUE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE STRENGTHENING OF MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING AMONG PEOPLES" WILL READ, OF COURSE, AS AN ENDORSEMENT, AMONG OTHER THINGS, OF RFE/RL BROADCASTS TO EASTERN EUROPE AND THE SOVIET UNION. SOVIETS THUS WOULD LIKELY REACT STRONGLY TO APPROACH FROM US IN SUPPORT OF THAT TEXT.

6. AN ALTERNATIVE APPROACH, LESS LIKELY TO BE RESENTED BY THE SOVIETS, AND PREFERRED BY MOST NATO DELEGATIONS, WOULD BE TO INSIST ON POSITIVE LANGUAGE IN THE INTRODUCTORY TEXT ON INFORMATION DEALING WITH ACCESS TO INFORMATION ON GENERAL TERMS. LATEST PROPOSALS HERE ARE A BRITISH TEXT, CONFIDENTIAL

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REJECTED OUT OF HAND BY SOVIETS: "CONSCIOUS OF THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CIRCULATION OF, AND OF ACCESS TO, INFORMATION, BOTH IN THEIR OWN RIGHT AND IN STRENGTHENING MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN PEOPLES"; AND A SOVIET COUNTERPROPOSAL MAKING NO RPT NO REFERENCE TO ACCESS, "ESTABLISH IT AS THEIR OBJECTIVE, WITH THE GROWTH OF CONFIDENCE AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF GOOD-NEIGHBOURLY RELATIONS BETWEEN STATES, TO FACILITATE THE FREER AND WIDER DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION OF ALL KINDS

AND IN THIS CONNECTION EXPRESS THEIR INTENTION TO APPLY, IN PARTICULAR, THE FOLLOWING:". THIS LANGUAGE IS NOW UNDER NEGOTIATION IN A SMALL INFORMAL GROUP (BRITISH, FRENCH, SOVIETS), WHICH WE COULD JOIN IF WE WISHED. IF WE TAKE THIS APPROACH, THE AUDIO-VISUAL PAPER WOULD HAVE MINIMAL CONTENT. THAT TEXT, AS IT NOW STANDS, WAS TRANSMITTED GENEVA 7509.

7. OUR CHOICE THEREFORE LIES BETWEEN: (A) OPENING WITH THE TEXT IN PARA 2 ABOVE, AT SOME RISK OF ROILING THE WATERS WITH THE SOVIETS HERE, AND THEN ABANDONING THE ATTEMPT AT THE APPROPRIATE MOMENT AND FALLING BACK TO EFFORTS TO GET GOOD GENERAL LANGUAG IN THE INTRODUCTORY TEXT; OR (B) TO BEGIN WITH EFFORTS TO GET POSITIVE LANGUAGE IN THE INTRODUCTORY TEXT, WHILE LEAVING THE AUDIO-VISUAL PAPER AS IT STANDS. ANY USEFUL LANGUAGE ON THIS TOPIC, IN ANY CONTEXT, WILL BE VERY DIFFICULT TO WREST FROM SOVIETS. DALE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: NEGOTIATIONS, RADIO BROADCASTING
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 MAR 1975
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975GENEVA01499
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750077-0778
From: GENEVA
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19750381/aaaacvdo.tel
Line Count: 133
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 75 STATE 035745, 75 GENEVA 912
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 16 JUN 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <16 JUN 2003 by izenbei0>; APPROVED <30 OCT 2003 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
05 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: CSCE POLICY: INFORMATION-RADIO BROADCASTING
TAGS: SOPN, PFOR, XG, US, CSCE
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 05 JUL 2006